

COURT STRUCTURE OF TEXAS

SEPTEMBER 1, 2014

Supreme Court
(1 Court -- 9 Justices)

-- Statewide Jurisdiction --

- Final appellate jurisdiction in civil and juvenile cases.

Court of Criminal Appeals
(1 Court -- 9 Judges)

-- Statewide Jurisdiction --

- Final appellate jurisdiction in criminal cases.

State Highest Appellate Courts

Courts of Appeals
(14 Courts -- 80 Justices)

-- Regional Jurisdiction --

- Intermediate appeals from trial courts in their respective courts of appeals districts.

State Intermediate Appellate Courts

District Courts
(458 Courts -- 458 Judges)

(360 Districts Containing One County and 98 Districts Containing More than One County)

-- Jurisdiction --

- Original jurisdiction in civil actions over \$200, divorce, title to land, contested elections.
- Original jurisdiction in felony criminal matters.
- Juvenile matters.
- 13 district courts are designated *criminal district courts*; some others are directed to give preference to certain specialized areas.

State Trial Courts of General and Special Jurisdiction

County-Level Courts
(510 Courts -- 510 Judges)

<p>Constitutional County Courts (254) (One Court in Each County)</p> <p>-- Jurisdiction --</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original jurisdiction in civil actions between \$200 and \$10,000. • Probate (contested matters may be transferred to District Court). • Exclusive original jurisdiction over misdemeanors with fines greater than \$500 or jail sentence. • Juvenile matters. • Appeals <i>de novo</i> from lower courts or on the record from municipal courts of record. 	<p>Statutory County Courts (238) (Established in 88 Counties plus 1 Multi-county Court)</p> <p>-- Jurisdiction --</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All civil, criminal, original and appellate actions prescribed by law for constitutional county courts. • In addition, jurisdiction over civil matters up to \$200,000 (some courts may have higher maximum jurisdiction amount). 	<p>Statutory Probate Courts (18) (Established in 10 Counties)</p> <p>-- Jurisdiction --</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited primarily to probate matters.
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County Trial Courts of Limited Jurisdiction

Justice Courts¹
(817 Courts -- 817 Judges²)

(Established in Precincts Within Each County)

-- Jurisdiction --

- Civil actions of not more than \$10,000.
- Small claims.
- Criminal misdemeanors punishable by fine only (no confinement).
- Magistrate functions.

Municipal Courts¹
(926 Cities -- 1,288 Judges³)

-- Jurisdiction --

- Criminal misdemeanors punishable by fine only (no confinement).
- Exclusive original jurisdiction over municipal ordinance criminal cases.³
- Limited civil jurisdiction.
- Magistrate functions.

Local Trial Courts of Limited Jurisdiction

1. All justice courts and most municipal courts are not courts of record. Appeals from these courts are by trial *de novo* in the county-level courts, and in some instances in the district courts. Some municipal courts are courts of record--appeals from those courts are taken on the record to the county-level courts. As of March 2014, 158 courts indicated that they were a court of record.

2. Some justices of the peace also serve as a judge in one or more municipal courts. Municipal judges may also serve in multiple courts.

3. An offense that arises under a municipal ordinance is punishable by a fine not to exceed: (1) \$2,000 for ordinances that govern fire safety, zoning, and public health or (2) \$500 for all others.